

NOVEMBER 18, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves U.S. Virgin Islands Emergency Declaration

Today, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that an emergency exists in the territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands and ordered Federal assistance to supplement the territory's response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from elevated levels of lead and copper in the water supply beginning on October 25, 2023, and continuing.

The President's action authorizes the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to coordinate all disaster relief efforts which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population, and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe on the island of St. Croix.

Specifically, FEMA is authorized to identify, mobilize, and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency. Emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance, under the Public Assistance program will be provided for water, other necessary related items such as filters and testing, and technical assistance necessary to identify and address immediate threats to public health and safety for 90 days from the start of the incident period.

Ms. Lai Sun Yee of FEMA has been appointed to coordinate Federal recovery operations in the affected areas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION MEDIA SHOULD CONTACT THE FEMA NEWS DESK AT (202) 646-3272 OR FEMA-NEWS-DESK@FEMA.DHS.GOV.

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